

PRESIDENT ERRS ON SOVIET MIGHT, EX-ADVISER SAYS

Sprague, '57 Consultant on
National Security, Calls for
More Defense Spending

SENATORS QUESTION HIM

Another Panel Hears Dulles,
Who Fails to Quell Charges
of Missile-Gap 'Confusion'

By JACK RAYMOND

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WASHINGTON, Feb. 24 —

Robert C. Sprague, who was co-chairman of a Presidential committee on national security in 1957, told Congress today that the Soviet military threat was more serious than President Eisenhower has indicated.

Mr. Sprague, a Boston banker and industrialist, said the United States' military program was inadequate, that this constituted a threat to the country's survival, and that a higher ratio of defense spending was necessary.

He also said key officials dealing with security frequently did not have all the facts they needed to make important decisions, "or they have the wrong facts."

"For a President or key officials to be uninformed or misinformed is usually far more dangerous than the risk of a possible security leak," Mr. Sprague observed.

Served on Gaither Panel

He was co-chairman of the so-called Gaither committee, which drew a grim picture of United States defenses in a secret report in 1957.

The report is still secret. The President, claiming Executive privilege, refused to divulge its contents to Congress. The committee was named for H. Rowan Gaither Jr., former head of the Ford Foundation, its original chairman.

Mr. Sprague testified before
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National Policy Machinery, a panel of the Government Operations Committee. The subcommittee, headed by Senator Henry M. Jackson, Democrat of Washington, is inquiring into the adequacy of policy-making institutions.

Meanwhile, Allen W. Dulles, director of the Central Intelligence Agency, apparently failed to clarify the "confusion" over intelligence estimates that had been reported earlier by Senator Lyndon B. Johnson of Texas, the Senate majority leader.

The confusion was attributed to apparent discrepancies be-

tween Mr. Dulles' estimates and those cited by Gen. Nathan F. Twining, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Mr. Dulles testified in private for more than three hours in a return appearance before the Senate Preparedness Subcommittee, of which Senator Johnson is chairman. Afterward, Senator Johnson said "the confusion has not been clarified."

Senator Stuart Symington, the Missouri Democrat who has been in the forefront of defense critics, said Mr. Dulles had "completely verified the fact that there has been no elimination of the ballistic missile gap or reduction in the three-to-one ratio against the United States." The three-to-one ratio was previously estimated in comparisons with the Soviet Union.

On the other hand, Senator Clifford P. Case, Republican of New Jersey, said the conflict over intelligence estimates was based simply on Mr. Dulles' attempt to include material in his presentation to congress that had not been included in the national intelligence estimates made available to General Twining. He said the material covered estimates of comparative Soviet-United States missile strength in the last two years.

Strapses, Disagreements

Although the hearing on national policy machinery was intended to deal with the institutions of government rather than the defense problem, Mr. Sprague brought home forcefully his differences with the Administration.

He identified himself as a "conservative Republican" who heads his own manufacturing company and is chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston. Yesterday another Republican banker, former Secretary of Defense Robert A. Lovett, questioned the correctness of some current policies as well as the effectiveness of the Government machinery.

A second witness today, Dr.

James P. Baxter 3d, president of Williams College, joined Mr. Lovett and Mr. Sprague in their contention that the United States could do more than it was now doing for national security.

Dr. Baxter, who also was a member of the Gaither committee, urged increased spending for defense.

Calls More Spending Vital

"Nobody hates inflation more than college presidents," he declared, "unless it is the directors of hospitals. But there are things that the American people spend a lot of money on that they well could do without or less of, in exchange of security."

Mr. Sprague discussed the President's view of the Soviet threat and the question of adequate spending in response to questions from Senator Karl Mundt, Republican of South Dakota. How would Mr. Sprague alert the country to the security danger? Senator Mundt asked.

"I think there is one man in the United States who can do this effectively and that is the President," Mr. Sprague replied, and he went on:

"I hesitate to say it but I feel strongly about it so I'm going to say it. I believe, and this is a personal belief, that the danger is more serious than the President has expressed himself to the American public."

"I don't know whether he feels this, or whether he doesn't. But I don't believe that the concern what I personally feel has as yet been expressed by the President to the American public."

Mr. Sprague, in addition to his work on the Gaither committee, conducted a study of continental air defenses for the Senate Armed Services Committee in 1953-55. He was also a consultant on the same subject to the National Security Council at that time.

He said he had been "shocked" to learn, as a result of his work on such committees that important officials, including members of Congress did not obtain important security information.

President Eisenhower has said repeatedly that his military spending proposals do not represent a "telling," but his best judgment of the country's needs.

K.C.
SPRAGUE